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Bard

A few nights ago
out of silence
came a small scream

just one
an animal in the act
of being killed

a squirrel in the talons
of an owl would
say such a word

that size
that terror
then silence as usual.

1 June 1992 KTC

Back in the world
I travel

behind a big truck
whose flapping mudflaps say

BODY KING

Latham

NY

I think I'll start a magazine called *Feeling*.

1 June 1992 KTC/WF

Cool and rain and grim at two p.m.
it looks like snow
the bleak
feeling of a parking lot a winter evening
waiting for my father Sunday night in '42
the quiet endlessness of things
and that the world is very big.

1 June 1992
for Charlotte

LUMBER AND THE BUILDING TRADES

for Charlotte

We take the tree apart
and live in it

material our mother wood
wit word

in Tibet they kept the Dharma pure
because they had no trees
nothing to build with but reality

— which is one of the ninety nine accurate translations of
¹*chos*, the Dharma that benefits everything that lives.

2.

We put pieces of wood together
we still live in trees,
monkey see and monkey do and vinyl siding

Hard to forgive a building
 for needing to be built
for not growing like a leaf
 out of the invisible tree of Art & Skill
or growing like a bird
 or are we the white and shell of

turning our live energies to its stability,

srog-shing
life-tree
house-wood
our vital tree

¹Pronounced *chö*.

of heaven
Osiris backbone
in us
our spine spine
of an image

this life holds upright before us
diaphane
safe in the empty air.

1 June 1992 KTC

WHAT IT MEANS

First sliver of the new moon
up in pale dark
over pink fleshy softness
over mountain

frog calling from the pond
and other answering.

2 June 1992
for Charlotte

for Charlotte

Box turtle heading for the pond
 turtle sounds like *tö trel*,
 the "uncontrived" of mind

he walks by unconcerned
 but veers a little to the east

Lots of burdock to be rooted up
 the sun is out
mud drying

Footprint of a fox.

3 June 1992

Admire the obvious
while it lasts.

3 June 1992 KTC

It isn't anything like that
It isn't anything like that.
It isn't anything like anything.
It isn't anything.
It isn't it.
It isn't.
It.

(Asleep with open eyes)

3 June 1992 KTC

for Charlotte

A wrist worn
with such offering

as might carry
in a golden ear

messages of I mean me

by touching this alien
breast I find myself

4 June 1992

GEOGRAPHY

The point is
my country is you.

5 June 1992
*for Charlotte*²

²A country yes, and the Queen thereof. But not yet have I seen, bright
wavering in the clear wind over Buzzards Bay, clear colored in dawn
light, your actual Flag. Though I have seen and loved the paraph with
which you signed all your letters, the ones that trudged their way in the
wallowing *Alert II* across those same waters.

for Charlotte

When I thought to make an offering
the truth that came to mind
was the whole stretch of the sea
between your island and New Bedford
and the wind coming in hard,
your soft lips close to my ear
admitting *j'ai froid* and I ducked
back down into the cabin for your coat
and came back into that wild sunlight
to huddle you and far off to the west
a rock with what seemed to me two seals
grey and dry above the wave beat
though it seemed to you seal-less, that rock,
and it and the whole sea stamped with
sunlight horizon to horizon one
golden disk lifted up past the cloudless blue.

5 June 1992

for Charlotte

Below the purple flowers of the rhododendron —
each one a mass of perfect
five petalled trumpets pink to mauve to shadow-of-red —
a purple finch is fossicking
among the seeds.
I see his head move
quick among the flowers.

6 June 1992

{ { { { { {

Curly brackets of early flowers
out to visit the world
just at dawn

after the *tho.rangs*,
before the waltzes.
I woke as late as light.

6 June 1992

Ink
is administration.
Ink is politeness.
Watch the river
before it goes.

6 June 1992

After all the shakes and spaces and squirrels
the car still goes the clock
still jives the words
keep getting old.

And even these
I can warm inside my hands,

the left one a sweet duvet-cushy bed
and the right an Abishag
the Shunamite warming

language with the hips of my hands.

6 June 1992
for Charlotte

I've seen two cats today
a mile apart
each one had a little rat in its mouth

and just as I was trying to explain this to myself
without thinking about Signs
just in terms of two days rain
flooded burrows and slick silent grass
I heard a cat-bird chirking at me
from a tall old white pine

and there was nowhere to flee from meaning.
And not much meaning.

6 June 1992
for Charlotte

THE MANY

The many
things the many
decidings
the touch
decoded through the trees

the union
of our properties the sense
to need each other and to tell

what we tell.
The disaster
comes slower
to the country
where stars are clearer

this mercy
is compatible with mind
I worry
at the escapade
of molecules

leave the subject
out of all those sentences
leaving the action alone:

pure school
of doingness

the act
stripped bare

the single miracle
that has to be true.

6 June 1992

NEWS FROM THE NEAREST EAST

Identify the year.
Elect the next vector of dismay.
Pick his — always his — name out of a hat —
 Shamir took his alias
 from Michael Connolly
 a respectable Revolutionary
not overfond of blood.

Heal me,
the sky is going.

By now a mind
has something to say to all the recent dead

whose irredentist thoughts
become our mind

(as if the father that a lot
to say finally to the son,
that infix, that afterthought.

6 June 1992

Have I touched it yet
that place in the quick of my will
where the future's stored

I would feel it
almost like pain almost like rain
beating in the window on an English night

and in the morning
waking wary
completely unknowing alone with the crows.

6 June 1992
for Charlotte

for Charlotte

It might be and it might be
measure of a lawn
day after rain the warm
night coming

Am I a pirate so
to sail the weather
greedy
to rip the bodice of the sea
and bare all her restless monuments

the breasts of light?
I am a man in a small town only,
kings and sons of kings hurry under the hedge.

6 June 1992

Can I catch this
the coin of no one

your profile
clear embossed
on it, the one
pays all my doubts

I was born on the skirts of a glacier
I was forgotten under the mulberry tree from Japan
the branches smelled of war and the
house smelled of coffee and the clock ticked

People file in to meet the dying priest
I wasn't born yesterday I was born tomorrow
my feet in fat little brown leather shoes
propped up on the whiffletree of a
wagon carrying cauliflowers at noontime

and I sing nervously with a glance over my
shoulder at the sea like an Irish god.

6 June 1992
for Charlotte